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Cc: Beck, Bill (LG)[WBeck@LATHROPGAGE.COM]
From: Merrigan, Jessie (LG)
Sent: Fri 1/31/2014 10:08:18 PM
Subject: Follow up on West Lake Landfill

Good afternoon David,

Following up on my message, there were several statements made at a panel discussion last night that are being widely picked up by the St. Louis media. We are very concerned that the statements grossly misstate any potential risk posed by Bridgeton Landfill and West Lake Landfill, and are causing unnecessary alarm. We understand from EPA's update to Senator Blunt that EPA is currently reviewing the risk assessment of SSE Impacts on West Lake, and that the review is not yet complete. But we wanted to reach out to see if EPA was considering any response to these statements given the potential for alarm.

Specifically Pattonville Assistant Fire Chief Matt LaVanchy offered the following statements which have since been aired on local television and radio. If you would like a copy of the audio file for the meeting, I would be happy to provide it. I would be happy to discuss this with you if some broader context would be helpful.

At 1:36 LaVanchy says:

"If worst comes to worst, you will be told to evacuate and, as the person in charge of that landfill issue, I would have no problem calling your home phone at three o'clock in the morning and telling you, you have 10 minutes to get out of town. That's the only way we can realistically handle the situation."

At about 1:50 mark, audience member asks,

Q: "Worst case scenario, let's say the fire reaches the radioactive material... what would occur... would all that go airborne, what?"

A: LaVanchy comments that he is not a radiation expert and has not commented on this with the media, but then continues:

“History tends to repeat itself, and any time we’ve had a problem with a nuclear power plant, let’s just use that as an example, the issue is that the core becomes hot, it cracks, radiation is available. What is the problem? It’s steam. That’s what causes radiation problems at nuclear power plants. It’s steam coming in contact with radioactive material that gets dispersed through the air. What happens with a fire that produces condensation in a landfill and eventually that encounters radioactive material? It’s basically the same principle. I mean, that, without getting scientific and saying that this is what’s going to happen and this is how bad it’s going to be, that’s the principle of what you’re looking at.”

(Audience member responds, “So...” and appears to mimic sound of evacuation alarms).

LaVanchy: “Yeah, I’ve said before, it all depends on which way the wind’s blowing that day. You know, it really does.”

(Audience member makes comment about shutting down everything in 10 miles).

LaVanchy: “The thing we need to keep in mind is we need more eyes on this than what are currently looking at it. There’s experts in this country that our elected officials need to bring to the table that have the understanding and the knowledge and the education to sit down in a room together, put their heads together and come up with a way to mitigate this entire situation. I don’t want to be sitting here-- because we won’t be sitting here when it happens; we’ll be somewhere else -- and say, ‘Well, we kind of thought it might happen.’ I mean, when it happens, it’s too late, and that’s what we need to, to take out of this room tonight... uh, I applaud everybody for coming tonight because education is the key to the knowledge. If you don’t get the information and correct information, then you’re spinning the wheels.

You can guesstimate and form your own opinions, but without the facts behind it, they’re just opinions. So, you know, I would challenge everybody in this room that the next meeting on February 20th, your homework assignment is to bring your neighbor because your neighbors need to know what’s going on. You know, we do the same thing with the fire department. We reach out to the mutual-aid departments in our area and tell them this is potentially what we’re looking

at responding to. We don't want you to come in blind and not know what we're dealing with. We lay out our maps. We show them every way into the site, what we potentially are looking at.

Education is the key in this, so you know, that, I'm going to spread... I tell the truth. If somebody has a question and I factually know the answers to that, I'm not gonna hide the truth from anybody. That's my guide." (Applause)

I look forward to discussing with you at your convenience.

Thank you,
Jessie



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